

NSC BRIEFING

13 January 1955
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COSTA RICAN "REVOLUTION"

- I. Costa Rican fighting culminates nine-month "war of nerves" against President Figueres by Venezuela and Nicaragua.
- II. Leader of rebel forces--estimated 800 men by Costa Ricans--said to be Teodoro Picado, Jr. (son of ex-president) graduate of West Point 1951.
 - A. Leading plotters thought to be
 1. Former presidents Calderon Guardia and Teodoro Picado (in alliance with local Communists 1940-48).
 2. Mariano Fournier (brother-in-law of ex-president Calderon, fought with Castillo Armas' Army of Liberation in Guatemala and may be rebels' contact with Castillo.
 - B. Force at Villa Quesada was believed to have been less than 100 men.

State Department review
completed

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1. Armed with US M-1 rifles and

Browning machine guns.

2. 50 calibre shell case marked SL 45
dropped from plane which strafed
San Jose on 12 January.

3. Marking means "manufactured by US
St. Louis ordnance plant in 1945."

C. "Airforce" so far observed consists of
AT-6, F-47 and one or two light planes.

III. Planning, material support for attack
probably provided by Venezuelan and
Nicaraguan governments.

A. On 10 Jan Nicaraguan President Somoza
told US Ambassador that "uprising"
would occur by 15 Jan.

1. Last July, Somoza had promised
ambassador that he would give
notice before moving against
Figueres.

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IV. Military developments unclear.

A. Villa Quesada and airstrip, first rebel
foothold, recaptured by government.

B. Other rebel incursions reported at
Puerto Soley, and at Penas Blancas,
near Nicaraguan border.

1. Government still has not controlled
situation.

C. Rebel air attacks early on 12 January.

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1. Government claims Venezuelan plane

downed.

D. Rebels making strong psychological offensive, with clandestine radio and threats of bombing.

V. Plotters may have underestimated government strength.

A. Rebels relying on:

1. Psychological offensive,
2. Alleged domestic discontent with Figueres.

B. Venezuela and Nicaragua unlikely become involved overtly.

C. Press reports indicate wide popular rallying to government in face of "invasion."

D. Only armed force, 1,500 Civil Guard, led by men of undoubted loyalty to Figueres.

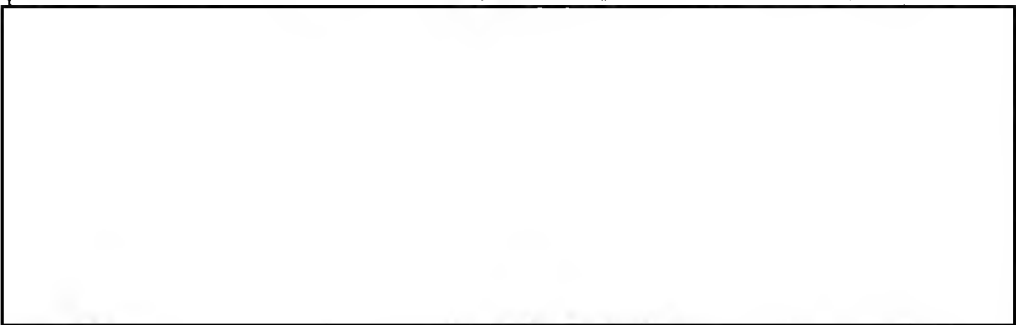
1. Has been undergoing intensive training in recent months.

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E. Reserves, reportedly being mobilized, showed high morale and ability during training. Reserve total about 3,000 (trained only about 1,800).



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